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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003965

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SUBJECT: IRAQI DEPUTY MINISTERS COMMENT ON SITE 4

REF: BAGHDAD 3891 (AND PREVIOUS)

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Daniel V. Speckhard for reason 1  
.4 (d).

¶1. (C) As reported previously, Minister of Interior Bolani formed three committees to investigate the cases of the 52 policemen for whom arrest warrants were issued in connection with the abuses at the former detention facility known as Site 4. These policemen include Major General Mahdi Sobiah, who was recently transferred from his command of the Second National Police Division.

¶2. (C) On October 19 Deputy Minister of Interior for Intelligence Kamal, who chairs one of the committees, told us his committee had reviewed the cases of 21 policemen - ranked lieutenant or higher - and had recommended that 15 people be arrested, but that Mahdi should receive only administrative punishment. Kamal said Bolani had not yet authorized execution of the 15 arrest warrants. On October 17 and 21 Deputy Minister of Interior for Police Ayden told us Mahdi had been placed under his supervision and would be given a job with insignificant responsibility.

¶3. (C) We will report by septel the results of the investigations of the other two committees. END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS 15 ARRESTS

¶4. (SBU) On October 19 the outgoing Rule of Law Coordinator, accompanied by Poloff, introduced incoming Rule of Law Coordinator Robert Murphy and incoming Senior MOI Consultant Don Grady to Major General Hussein Ali Kamal, Deputy Minister of Interior for Intelligence.

¶5. (C) In response to our questions, Kamal told us that:

-- He chairs one of the three committees formed by Bolani to investigate the allegations against the 52 people for whom arrest warrants were issued.

-- His committee consists of himself and two other people and is charged with investigating the suspects with a rank of lieutenant or higher.

-- The committee had not received all the evidence against the suspects that it had requested. Moreover, many of the reported victims declined to give evidence.

-- Nevertheless, the committee had reviewed the charges against 21 policemen, including Major General Mahdi. It had recommended that arrest warrants be executed for 15 people, but not for Mahdi.

-- Bolani had not yet decided whether to authorize execution of the 15 arrest warrants.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS ADMINISTRATIVE PUNISHMENT FOR MAHDI

¶6. (C) With regard to Mahdi, Kamal continued that:

-- He had recommended that the arrest warrant for Mahdi be executed.

-- But the other two members of the committee had outvoted him and had recommended that Mahdi be given administrative punishment such as withholding his pay for a specified period, but that he not be arrested.

-- Mahdi had admitted that detainees had been interrogated in his office but denied that any abuses had occurred.

-- The 15 people whom the committee had recommended be arrested would probably testify in court that they had seen Mahdi commit abuses.

¶7. (C) Kamal also said that he planned to discuss Mahdi with Bolani, because Mahdi might well continue his abusive practices.

DEPUTY MINISTER FOR POLICE GIVEN SUPERVISION OF MAHDI

¶8. (C) Deputy Minister of Interior for Police Ayden Qudir told us on October 21 that Mahdi is a problem. Ayden added that after being relieved of command of the Second National Police Division, Mahdi had been placed under his supervision and would be given a job with insignificant responsibility.  
KHALILZAD